DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 265 929 PS 015 569

AUTHOR Lee, Marjorie W.
TITLE [Making Child Development Relevant for All Children: Implications for Teacher Education.]
PUB DATE 15 Nov 85
NOTE 19p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (New Orleans, LA, November 14-17, 1985). For a related document, see ED 264 967.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Development; Cognitive Development; Cognitive Style; *Curriculum Problems; Early Childhood Education; *Educational Change; Ethnicity; Higher Education; *Relevance (Education); *Teacher Characteristics; *Teacher Education

ABSTRACT

Discussed are some changes needed in teacher education programs if prospective teachers' training in child development is to be relevant to the ethnically diverse children encountered in the classroom. Particular attention is given to characteristics teachers must have to teach children in large urban areas; the incorporation of human growth and development in all aspects of teacher education; training teachers to respond with appropriate instructional strategies to students' culturally-based learning styles; preparing teachers to teach students the intellectual skills they need to learn and use their knowledge; and recommendations for expanding the teacher preparation curriculum and the length of the teacher education program. (RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
X Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED265929

PS 015569

((MAKING CHILD DEVELOPMENT RELEVANT FOR ALL CHILDREN: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION))

Making child development relevant for all children refers to changes that must occur in Teacher Education to improve the quality of teachers prepared to teach all children, especially those who are members of one of the minority ethnic groups, live in a large urban area, and/or live in poverty. By child development we mean preparation of teachers who have an understanding of how all children they teach grow, change, learn and become more mature. This requires an understanding of how the environment (large city, small town, rural area, coastal city, landlocked town or some other aggregate location) and social conditions such as poverty or membership in a one-parent family influence the development of children from the different ethnic groups present in the U.S.

The mission of Teacher Education is to provide an instructional curriculum and other professional experiences that systematically prepare prospective teachers to understand how diverse groups of humans grow, change, and learn in various aggregate settings. This training must prepare teachers to provide appropriate instruction to achieve a match for all children from every ethnic group enrolled in their class(s). Teacher preparation must be designed to have child development underlie all aspects of the training so that teachers can combine this component with ethnicity and social environment in order to achieve a match with each child's learning style.

For this workshop session, I will discuss some of the changes required in Teacher Education in order to make child development relevant of all children, and Dr. Houston will discuss changes needed in the laboratory experiences to enable teachers to acquire this competence prior to graduation.

A paper presented by Marjorie W. Lee, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education, Howard University, Washington, D.C., at the 1985 Annual Conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 15, 1985.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY Marjorie W. Lee TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

First, let us look at some salient characteristics teachers must have in order to teach children in large urban areas. The Superintendent of the Public School of the District of Columbia has identified two important characteristics that urban teachers must possess: a positive attitude and intelligence (McKenzie, 1984). A positive attitude refers to an orientation that includes commitment to education in urban schools and willingness to function in several roles such as counselor, nurse, and role model. A positive attitude also suggests being able to identify with the children of today—their ethnicity, age level, living conditions and concerns—with respect.

Intelligence, of course, refers to the teacher's level of mental ability, but it also refers to the superior interest in the "life of the mind" with an ability to display this intelligence to students while teaching in all subject areas. Both, the positive attitude and intelligence, must be manifested in high standards and high expectations for all children, regardless of ethnic group membership.

Francis Chase (1980), in an investigation of 16 successful, large-city school districts, found four other teacher competencies associated with children's school success. They include the abilities to:

- o implement a variety of techniques, approaches, and methods of curriculum delivery so that instruction is relevant to urban children.
- o work with parents as partners.
- o teach basic skills on many cognitive levels.
- o teach content and basic skills using the creative and performing arts reflective of the child's ethnic group.

Wilson (1984) states that <u>all schools</u> must provide teachers: (1) who have high expectations; (2) who value upward mobility and encourage enrollment in college or preparation for the workworld; (3) who competently teach math,

science, and writing skills; and (4) who know a great deal about individualizing instruction. Instead, our schools provide these elements for some children through rewarding their style of learning (analytical styles--high language competencies, and fluency in sequential, symbolic, logical reasoning) as preferred and more valuable. Relational learning styles are discouraged and labelled as "inferior".

The Black community and some other ethnic communities foster a relational learning style according to Hale (1982); (a way of learning that is dependent on visuospatial, nonverbal, synthetic reasoning[Webb, 1983] and is field-dependent —— meaning that individuals tend to function better in cooperative, informal, and loosely structured environments, in which students and teachers work closely together to achieve common goals [Gilbert II, 1985]). Black children and some others (i.e., Hispanics and Native American), especially those who grow up in large urban areas become proficient in this style early in their development. However, schools expect and reward the learning style that is field-independent (analytical style) where individuals must function in formal rather rigidly structured environments (Gilbert II). Achievement results from individual, and often competitive efforts with reward given for quality of the completed task rather than for effort expended. Differences in learning style should not be disadvantages for some children (Blacks, Hispanics, Native American) while advantages for others. Teachers are required to successfully teach <u>all</u> children assigned to them for instruction, and thus, teacher preparation programs must train teachers to provide instruction for all children.

Webb's (1983) literature review revealed that neither the left brain (superior for analytical thinking) nor the right brain (superior for relational thinking) is better than the other. Both brains have different functions and, therefore, should be used cooperatively. To be truly competent, independent, effective learners, individuals need <u>to team</u> both hemispheres of the brain.

This means that many modalities must be used for instruction, i.e. spoken language, written communications, visual communication such as mime, and movement. A variety of elements within the various stimuli (environmental, emotional, sociological, physical and psychological [Dunn, 1983]) must be used so as to match each child's dominant learning style which was learned in the ethnic cultural conditions and is fostered by that community. In order to have the required skills, teachers must be competent in providing instruction in both learning styles and be flexible in their techniques to be able to teach on a variety of cognitive levels while also drawing upon a diverse set of curriculum delivery systems and approaches.

In addition, advanced technology pervades our society with more and more children entering school having had experiences with computers or computer operated equipment. Many educators agree that computers are requisites for classroom instruction. In order for teachers to instruct the "computering child," they must be technologically literate themselves. Teachers must possess the necessary abilities to engage in complex thinking (higher level thinking) and have skills that enable them to tap a continuously changing information base (Hersh, 1983). Teachers should be capable of teaching computer skills to children deprived of this experience outside of school. Too few teachers are sophisticated enough to teach either the child deprived of a home computer or the child who has one ---but the latter child has a distinct advantage, regardless of the teacher's computer skills.

John Slaughter, in A Nation at Risk (1983), prepared by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, warned that there is "a growing chasm between a small scientific and technological elite and a citizenry ill-informed; indeed uninformed on issues with a science component" (p. 19). McKenzie (1984) expressed concern that inequities between the (wealthy) haves and (disadvantaged)

have-nots will widen the economic gap between the well-off and the poor [a large number of whom are not members of the dominant ethnic group]. She proposes that Federal, state, and local initiatives elevate standards for teacher preparation, teacher certification, professional development, and career advancement, in order to include computer-literacy for teachers (also competence in teaching using this machine), and to avoid these consequences. Teacher education must keep up with society!

Now, let us turn our attention to the second component of my discussion ——changes needed in teacher education. A big and long overdue change in teacher education is the way child development is viewed. As currently conceptualized, child development does not begin to explore common knowledge about the young in the dominant ethnic groups, and rarely does it include knowledge specific to the various ethnic groups. Subsequently, after graduation, many teachers are unable to achieve a match between their instruction and the needs of minority children. Therefore, new skills and some important concepts basic to teaching must be learned under crisis conditions after employment.

Child development as taught in most teacher education programs uses the norms and assumptions about young children as they were presented by Arnold Gesell at the beginning of the twentieth century. Those norms and ideas were derived from a population of children whose parents were either students or faculty at Yale University, and thus, were never meant to be generalized to all children (Weber, 1984, p. 61). The transfer of these standards and principles to all children shows a complete disregard for environmental influences on development. And yet, all children regardless of their SES background are being held to these standards in our schools at all levels from preschools to college.

We know that the ways in which a person learns are directly related to that person's cognitive style (ways of thinking). Cole (1971) explains that cognition develops in conjunction with the behaviors in which people engage in their everyday lives. Therefore, if there is a vast difference in the daily

experiences of two people (regardless of ethnic group affiliation), it is likely that they will develop different cognitive styles. Within a complex society, social classes and ethnic groups are two major ecological structures that produce diversity in human lifestyles and development (Havighurst, 1976). Combined, these structures both influence a set of behaviors and attitudes that define a person's life-style and development, and also separate him/her from other groups.

All people have unique cultural experiences that influence their styles of learning. And everyone has a preferred way in which information or skills are concentrated on, absorbed, and retained. Therefore, teachers must be trained to respond to these unique culturally-based learning styles with appropriate instructional strategies. These strategies should be based on child development reflective of assumptions for that child's ethnic group membership. That is, child development must be changed to incorporate the assumptions about human behavior as described by Hilliard (1976). He explains that:

1. A behavioral style is a framework from which a person views the world.
2. Several styles can be described. At one extreme is the analytic and at the other extreme is the relational, with other possible styles on a continuum between.
3. A person may change his or her basic style by learning aspects of other styles.
4. Since styles are the framework from which one views the world, the style can be observed in all areas of his expression, such as through his world view, language, music, religion, art, work, dance, problem solving, sports, writing, or any other area of human expression.
5. Some relationship exists between style and socioeconomic level.
6. A strong relationship exists between style and cultural or ethnic group membership, especially where a given ethnic group is located at a traditional point on the socioeconomic scale.
7. No evidence exists of a relationship between basic intelligence and style. Able people are found to the same degree among all style users.

8. Every style is necessary, valuable, and useful in human experience if society is to function fully.
9. A "gifted" person is one who has integrated and harmonized the different styles within himself or herself to focus one harmonized style.

In fact, research supports that multi-ethnic experiences provide the most opportunity for individuals to develop facility in many learning styles, and thus have the opporttunity to achieve the most from schooling.

This means that school instruction must draw from a curriculum that values and includes the cultures of all children enrolled in the classrooms. An implication from this mandate then, is that teacher preparation programs change to train teachers to carry out their instruction in ways that match the learning style each child brings to school and also teach each child skills needed for success in the mainstream American culture, as well as for global functioning. This means that schools of education must be held accountable for graduating students (new teachers) who have the competence to develop attitudes and learning behaviors that are consistent with each school district's commitment to success for all students. Underlying the accomplishment of this requirement is the revision of how child development is conceptualized and utilized in the teacher preparation program.

Clabaugh, Feden, & Vogel (1984) recommend the revolutionization of teacher training. They suggest increasing training to include some missing components into it, namely a multi-ethnic, non-categorical approach that places early childhood, elementary, special and secondary educators together for a rigorous grounding in non-negotiable core requirements that cover all aspects of human growth and development —— from birth through senescence. They explain that "the body of knowledge inherent in human growth and development forms a central organizing principle for the education of teachers much the same way as the biological sciences affect the practice of medicine." They recommend that this knowledge and its implications for practice underlay the foundation

of all education courses; i.e., all facets of teacher education should systematically develop an understanding of how humans (multi-ethnic groups) grow, develop, and change. This change and its full implementation will go a long way toward the preparation of teacher who can effectively influence the development of all children.

Incorporation of human growth and development in all aspects of teacher education translates especially into "student teaching." Traditionally, this phase of training has been experienced at the end of the teacher preparation program. It is important that students practice-teach throughout the training process, so that knowledge and skills can be transferred into guided practice (Sparks, 1983), and simultaneously, ideas of teaching and learning can be re-examined. These modifications will assist teachers to restructure their concepts, attitudes, and conceptualizations of subject matter and theory, such as human growth and development, before working with children in classrooms. This extended guided practice would also provide time for students to work in many different settings (rural, big city, etc.) with children from several SES and ethnic groups.

A key element that will make student practice more effective in the training process is guidance from teacher educators. Practice without feedback, the provision of instructional information directly to the prospective teacher following the practice efforts, can occur without adding much, if anything positive to the training program. Joyce and Showers (1980) suggest that teacher educators provide verbal instructional information to teachers-in-training or feedback through means such as microteaching, role-playing, peer observation/critiques, or coaching as central parts of the training program. They explain that feedback is the synthesizing component of training, because it is a vehicle for guiding the transfer of theory, content, and methods to practice. Instead, it is more likely that student teachers are observed a few times at the end of the

practice period for grading purposes. At this time, it is too late for the feedback to be incorporated into practice or for effective guidance. Therefore, both practice itself and feedback relative to practice must be experienced throughout the training process if the goal of preparing competent teachers is to be realized as they enter classrooms.

Two other changes needed in teacher education that will help teachers be better prepared to make development more relevant for all the children assigned to them are: (1) a change in the focus of methods courses, and (2) a change in the scope of the content. Traditionally, the focus of methods has been content and techniques for teaching content. A coalition of educators who are members of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development has formed a "Collaborative on Thinking" in order to promote the combining of the foci: content and critical-thinking skills. These educators are not calling for the substitution of an emphasis on thinking skills in teacher preparation, but rather they are promoting "the teaching of academic content in ways that develop and encourage student thinking to ensure that students are explicitly taught cognitive skills" (Olson, 1985a).

In order for this directive to be carried out, more emphasis will have to be given to ways of influencing specific types of cognitive development for <u>all</u> children. That is, teacher training will have to be modified so that it prepares teachers to be able to teach students the intellectual skills they need in order to learn and make use of knowledge. Teacher training as it currently is, falls short too often in graduating teachers who can nurture well-developed cognitive skills such as the ability to see relationships, make comparisons, draw inferences, and buttress arguments with facts. Each of these skills are required today and will continue into the future in our information and service fields that almost exclusively depend on information processing using high technology. Teacher training has given teachers the

content they must cover in the curriculum, but has not empowered them with the tools to help children continue learning about these subjects or be able to use information in mathematical and scientific situations. Prospective teachers need to develop their own higher-order thinking skills during the training process and at the same time, learn to stimulate and effect the development of these skills in the students they teach.

The other change needed is related to the scope of content and principles as taught in methods courses for teachers. A group of educators and individuals responsible for education in 50 states work together as the Council of Chief State School Officers, a commission that is looking at education to determine its needs. The commission found that American education does not give students a global perspective of human events nor do our classroom teachers share about their practices with colleagues in other countries. Therefore, the commission called for the following requirements that will necessitate additional training for teachers at all levels: (1) all public schools must offer instruction in a foreign language; (2) support the learning of a second language in the earliest years of schooling; (3) build measures of speaking and listening proficiency in foreign languages; and (4) require a sequence of second-language study leading to demonstrated proficiency for students in the academic or college-bound track in high school (Olson, 1985b). Of course, each of these components requires trained teachers who have competencies to carry out these mandates. Again, response to the recommendation by teacher education will require expansion of both the teacher preparation curriculum and the length of the training period, if American teachers and the children they teach are to compare favorably with their cross-national counterparts.

The various national reports indicate that public education is failing to educate our children with the skills needed to function in the world and compare favorably with youth of other nations. This finding is even more at

crisis levels for our minority population, especially for Black Americans. Headlines such as, "Black Children, in 'Crisis,' Said Getting Little Help" (Rose, 1985) and "Minority Teachers: Shortage Predicted in Late 1980s and into the 1990s" (ASCUS, 1980), points out still other changes needed in teacher education to enable it to prepare teachers who can effectively teach all children. We have already discussed the need for child development to reflect the norms and ethnically-related influences on the development of Black and other minority ethnic-group children, and the need for this informaiton to permeate the training curriculum and experiences. In addition, Schools of education must make a concerted effort to attract students from each of the minority ethnic groups into teaching so that children from these groups have ethnic role-models and trained educators who can provide insight into approaches to positively influence development for children.

To prepare teachers for the diverse ethnic groups they will teach and the influences they must support or ameliorate in the various aggregate-settings, teacher education must develop standards of minimum competence new teachers will have and then, revise preservice programs to incorporate components to train individuals to meet these standards. Schools of education must also provide follow-up services to teachers after graduation, similar to the on-the-job support offered by the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, until these neophytes can carry out their responsibilities competently and independently. Teacher Educators at this university offer this commitment to stand behind the teachers they train in the form of a guarantee to both the prospective teachers and to administrators and parents who inherit them in classrooms working with their children (Forum, Education Week, 1985).

In summary, two types of components must be included in child development as taught to prospective teachers: ethnic-group elements for the minority populations and elements inherent in the various aggregate-settings in which people live (in which children are reared and develop). Samples of these elements and related competencies teachers should have, are as follows: [content on the chart]

Schools of education absolutely must change the focus, scope, and length of their training programs as well as the ways in which these training experiences are implemented if they expect to meet the demand for competent professionals who can MAKE CHILD DEVELOPMENT RELEVANT FOR ALL CHILDREN THEY TEACH.

Now let us turn our attention to what this competent professional should look like in the classroom. Dr. Houston will describe what this student teacher should be doing in the Lab School setting and what this student should be exposed to during the guided-practice phase of the training.

REFERENCES

Ascus Research Report (1980, March). "Teacher supply/demand in the United States.

Chase, F. S. (Ed.) (1980). Educational rentalization: A search for promising development. In Educational Quandaries and Opportunities. Dallas: Urban Education Studies, 33.

Clabaugh, G. K., Fender, P. D., and Vogel, R. (1984, May). Revolutionizing teacher education: Training developmentally oriented teachers. Phi Delta Kappan, 65, 615-616.

Cole, M. and others (1971). The cultural context of thinking and learning. New York: Basic Books.

Dunn, R. "Learning Style and Its Relation to Exceptionality at Both Ends of the Spectrum." Exceptional Children, 49, (1983) 496-506.

Forum (1985, September 4). Education Week, 5, (11) 36.

Gilbert II, S. E., and Gay, G. (1985, October). Improving the success in school of poor black children. Phi Delta Kappan, 67, 133-137.

Hale, J. E. (1982). Black children: Their roots, culture and learning styles. Provo, U.T.: Brigham Young University Press.

Havighurst, R. (1976). The relative importance of social class and ethnicity in human development. Human Development, 19, 56-64.

Hersh, R. H. (1983, May). How to avoid becoming a nation of technopeasants. Phi Delta Kappan, 64, 635-38.

Hilliard, Asa (1976). Alternatives to IQ testing: An approach to the identification of gifted minority children. Final Report to the California State Department of Education.

Joyce, B., and Showers, B. (1980, February). Improving inservice training: The message of research. Educational Leadership, 37, 379-85.

McKenzie, F. D. (1984, Spring). Education, not excuses. Journal of Negro Education, 53, 97-105.

National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983, April). A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Olson, L. (1985, October 9). Plan would place more emphasis on international issues. Education Week, 5, (6) p. 12.

Rose, E. (1985, October 30). Black children, in 'Crisis,' said getting little help. Education Week, 5 (9) p. 8.

Sparks, G. M. (1983, November). Synthesis of research on staff development for effective teaching. Educational Leadership, 41, 65-72.

REFERENCES (cont'd)

Webb, G.M. (1983, April). Left/right brains, teammates in learning. Exceptional Children, 49, 508-15.

Weber, E. (1984). Ideas Influencing Early Childhood Education: A Theoretical Analysis, New York: Teachers College Press.

Wilson, L. S. (1983-84, December and January). Clark and Bell are both right. Educational Leadership, 41, 88-99.

EXAMPLES OF VARIABLES AND COMPETENCES NEEDED TO MAKE
CHILD DEVELOPMENT RELEVANT FOR ALL CHILDREN
ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO LIVE IN LARGE URBAN AREAS

ETHNIC GROUP VARIABLES	AGGREGATE-LOCATION VARIABLES	NEEDED TEACHER COMPETENCIES
1. View of learning (education and and formal instruction) varies from one ethnic group to another.	1. Location of many types of employment on a variety of levels for a large number of people.	1. A positive attitude toward human beings: - high expectations about learning - respect for all cultures - values upward mobility for all
2. Cultural concept of intelligence: - "cleverness" - assimilation of knowledge - diverse ways of thinking - encourages relational or analytical cognitive style	2. Level of sophistication (based on centers political and cultural emphasis)	2. Intelligence (innate cognition and superior interest in developing minds to function in many aggregate settings) Also, willingness to engage in continuing education and professional development
3. Childrearing Practices - permissive - authoritarian - authoritative - children viewed as possessions - childhood viewed as a time of becoming	3. Parents usually work outside of home; rely on surrogate parents.	3. Ability to provide total care for young children (have instructional strategies and techniques to influence all aspects of development)
4. Family structure and roles of members - nuclear family - extended family - adopted family - one parent family - tribal or clan grouping - males dominant - females educated - androgynous roles - female homemakers - children wage-earners	4. Childcare facilities needed for employed parents (adults depend on earned income for most necessities and services: food, clothing, shelter, etc.).	4. Ability to work with parents as partners
5. How precocity is conceptualized and carried out. Is it encouraged in babies and sustained throughout childhood or is it discouraged?	5. Location of many cultural events and experiences (many diverse opportunities existing in close proximity to one another)	5. Ability to teach basic skills on many cognitive levels; using a variety of techniques, approaches, and methods of curriculum delivery systems

EXAMPLES OF VARIABLES AND COMPETENCIES NEEDED (cont'd)

ETHNIC GROUP VARIABLES	AGGREGATE - LOCATION VARIABLES	NEEDED TEACHER COMPETENCIES
6. Influence of religion - taboos - requirements (pray several times per day or attend service on the sabbath) - special holidays - special behaviors (cast eyes down when in presence of authority, etc.) - rituals (dance for rain, chant for repentance, etc.) - values - concept of morality	6. Types of entertainment (recreation at home or outside of home that cost money or require membership) and codes for good and bad (fostered by family or through presence of police) Visibility of police and their roles in the community; level of crime that is the norm -- level of restrictions and safety for residents	6. Ability to provide individualized instruction and teach the basic skills through using the creative and expressive arts fostered by a variety of ethnic groups Ability to foster desirable values and attitudes, as well as help children clarify their existing values/attitudes
7. View of technology and automation and use of them	7. Mass media readily available in many forms	7. Be computer/technologically literate and able to teach using these machines as well as able to teach others to use them
8. Role of play and its time allotment (play as child's work or children play until age of 12 yrs. old; types of games, riddles, and proverbs in the culture)	8. Physical environment (heavily cemented, few pars, small grassy plots, large front and back yards, acres of land surrounding homes, etc.)	8. Ability to provide adequate physical activity in a variety of settings and to foster a sense of balance between work and play
9. Sphere of operation - provincial (rural, small town) - regional (middle-size town, large city, megalopolis) - global (national, trans-continental)	9. Transportation (rapid, with long rush hours, congested streets, periodic public service, no public service, etc.)	9. Teacher familiar with several cultures and lives close enough to work closely with families Teacher is either bi- or multi-lingual and can function in several cultures
10. Vulnerabilities: uniques diseases and syndromes; also specific needs or living conditions	10. Conditions present due to people living in close proximity to one another; and due to presence of rodents, pests, and unhealthy or unsafe situations (trash, garbage, specific diseases)	10. Able to function in a variety of roles: instructor, counselor, nurse, custodian, surrogate parent, advocate, mentor, and role model
11. Percentage of group living in poverty	11. Dominant living quarters (detached house with yard, apartments, high rises, row houses, cabins, tent, mobile home)	11. Ability to provide instruction using a variety of clinical techniques in a variety of settings